

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----071713 181414Z /43

O R 181403Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8224
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 LONDON 11315

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

PARIS FOR DICK MOOSE ONLY

FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, RH
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: MEETING WITH IAN SMITH

SUMMARY: SMITH MAINTAINED HIS WILLINGNESS TO ATTEND PRIVATE MEETING OF PRINCIPALS TO "EXPLORE THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S POSITION." GRAHAM AND I OUTLINED THE BASIS OF THEIR POSITION ALONG LINES SET OUT AT DAR. SMITH ASKED FOR A PAPER ON THE SUBJECT WHICH WE AGREED TO GIVE HIM TO TAKE UP WITH HIS COLLEAGUES ON THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. WHILE HE GAVE NO CONCESSIONS, HE AT LEAST HAS AGREED TO ENTER INTO DISCUSSION WITH US ON THE SUBSTANCE OF AN ALL PARTIES MEETING. END SUMMARY.

1. GRAHAM AND I MET WITH IAN SMITH AND JACK GAYLARD
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FOR ABOUT FORTY-FIVE MINUTES MONDAY NOON. THE MEETING WAS BUSINESSLIKE AND FRIENDLY. THERE WAS A COMPLETE ABSENCE OF ANY HOSTILITY IN THE ATMOSPHERE.

2. GRAHAM NOTED THAT WE WERE LEAVING THAT EVENING FOR LONDON TO CONFER WITH SECRETARIES VANCE AND OWEN. AFTER MEETINGS WITH ALL THE PARTIES INCLUDING FRONT

LINE PRESIDENTS, WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT A CONFERENCE IS NOW POSSIBLE. MUGABE SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO ATTEND A MEETING IN ZAMBIA ON THE 5TH AND 6TH OF AUGUST, THOUGH NKOMO WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF FAILURE AND WANTED TO WAIT. IN THE MEAN-TIME HE HAD PROMISED TO BE IN TOUCH WITH US AGAIN. GRAHAM NOTED THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS' DISPOSITION TO ASSIST POSITIVELY AS THEY HAD IN REACHING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES ON NAMIBIA. HE REVIEWED THE BASIS ON WHICH HE THOUGHT AGREEMENT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE AND ASKED SMITH WHETHER HE HAD DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH HIS COLLEAGUES ON THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

3. SMITH SAID HE WAS WAITING FOR A DEFINITE PROPOSAL BEFORE DISCUSSING IT WITH HIS COLLEAGUES. HE FELT IT STILL WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE A MEETING AMONG THE SIX TO "SEE WHAT THE OTHERS HAD TO OFFER." HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENT WAS NOT GOING WELL BUT HE SAID THAT COULD ALWAYS CHANGE. HE SAID THERE WERE SOME AREAS WHERE THE CEASE-FIRE WAS TAKING HOLD.

4. IN DISCUSSING A SETTLEMENT THE IMPORTANT THING STILL WAS TO MAINTAIN THE CONFIDENCE OF THE WHITES. I RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT WE HAD BECOME CONVINCED AFTER TALKING TO MANY PERSONS OVER A NUMBER OF MONTHS
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THAT THE WHITE POPULATION'S WILLINGNESS TO REMAIN DEPENDED ON ENDING THE WAR AND A RETURN OF ECONOMIC PROSPERITY RATHER THAN ANY LEGAL PROTECTIONS IN A

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CONSTITUTION. SMITH ADDED THAT LAW AND ORDER MUST BE PROTECTED WHICH WE AGREED WAS PART OF ENDING THE WAR. I THEN ADDED THAT WE KNOW WHAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S POSITION WOULD BE AT A CONFERENCE. THEY APPROACHED IT AS WE DID ON THE BASIS OF OUR PROPOSALS AS ELABORATED AT DAR. WHEN HE ASKED US WHAT THESE WERE WE OUTLINED WHAT WE THOUGHT WERE THE BASIC POINTS -- REPLACEMENT OF THE 69' CONSTITUTION; A COUNCIL HEADED BY A RESIDENT COMMISSIONER OR A NEUTRAL CHAIRMAN WHO CONTROLLED LAW AND ORDER; ELECTIONS AFTER A BRIEF PERIOD WHICH, HOWEVER, MIGHT EXTEND BEYOND DECEMBER 31; A REVISED AND AGREED INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION; AND PROVISIONS FOR CREATION OF A NEW SECURITY DEFENSE FORCE WHICH INCLUDED PATRIOTIC FRONT FORCES. SMITH PICKED UP THE LAST OF THESE WHICH HE SAID HE WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY ACCEPTING. WE NOTED THAT THERE MUST BE SOME WAY IN WHICH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S FORCES COULD BE INCORPORATED INTO THE NEW SOCIETY. WE WERE NOT ASKING, AS HE CLAIMED, THAT HE DISBAND HIS DEFENCE FORCE. THEY WOULD PERFORM A MAJOR FUNCTION IN THE CONFIDENTIAL

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NEW FORCE. PATRIOTIC FRONT FORCES WOULD BE BROUGHT INTO BOTH THE ACTIVE AND RESERVE FORCES. WE THOUGHT THAT WITH FURTHER STUDY THEY WOULD FIND THAT LORD CARVER'S PLAN WAS A PRACTICAL AND REASONABLE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM WHICH PROVIDED A COMPROMISE THEY THEMSELVES WERE MOVING TOWARDS.

5. WE PRESSED SMITH ON TIMING NOTING THAT CONSIDERATION OF THE CONSTITUTION WAS MOVING AHEAD AND HE WOULD BE FORCED SOON TO ASK FOR APPROVAL IN THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND GO TO A REFERENDUM WITH IT. IT WOULD THEN BE MORE DIFFICULT TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES. WE SAID WE THOUGHT THE FRONT LINE WOULD BE WILLING TO HELP ON THE MORE DIFFICULT AREAS WHERE WE HAD NOT YET ACHIEVED AGREEMENT WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT--COMPOSITION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL, THE MAKE-UP OF THE POLICE AND THE SECURITY FORCES. HOWEVER, THEY WERE ASKING US WHETHER SMITH WAS

PREPARED TO "BE REASONABLE" ON THE FIVE PRINCIPLES
STATED ABOVE. WE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THEY, ANY MORE
THAN WE, WERE PREPARED TO PRESS THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO
MOVE ON THEM. SMITH TOOK EXCEPTION TO OUR DESCRIPTION
OF THESE POINTS AS "REASONABLE." WE ACCEPTED THEY
COULD BE CHARACTERIZED AS ONE WISHED BUT WE BELIEVED
THEY WERE A MINIMUM BASIS FOR DISCUSSION AT A CONFERENCE.
WE DISCUSSED COMPOSITION OF A COUNCIL SAYING THE PF
WAS NOW ASKING FOR A MAJORITY AS WAS THE SALISBURY GROUP.

ANALYSIS BUT THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT AT A

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8226
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6. SMITH SAID THAT ACCORDING TO HIS INFORMATION
MUGABE AND NKOMO WERE DRIFTING FURTHER APART. I
REPLIED THAT THEY MAY BE BUT WHATEVER ONE'S ASSESSMENT
OF THE RELATION BETWEEN ZANU AND ZAPU, OR FOR THAT
MATTER THE UNITY OF ZANU, A WAY MUST BE FOUND TO TAKE
ACCOUNT OF AND INCLUDE THE ZANLA ELEMENTS WHICH WERE
NOW DOING SO MUCH FIGHTING INSIDE THE COUNTRY IF PEACE
WERE TO BE ASSURED.
7. SMITH ASKED US FOR A PIECE OF PAPER CONTAINING THE
BASES FOR DISCUSSION AT A MEETING WHICH WE HAD DESCRIBED

TO HIM. WE AGREED TO FURNISH THEM LATER IN THE DAY
(TRANSMITTED SEPTTEL). HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT HIS
COLLEAGUES VIEW OF THEM WOULD BE. I POINTED OUT THAT
THEY HAD ALREADY ACCEPTED THEM LAST SEPTEMBER. SMITH'S
RETORT WAS "THAT WAS BEFORE I TALKED SOME SENSE INTO
THEM" WITH A SLIGHT SMILE. HE UNDERTOOK TO DISCUSS THE
SUBJECT OF A MEETING AND THE BASIS FOR IT AS SET OUT
IN OUR PAPER WITH HIS COLLEAGUES IF THEY RETURNED TO
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THE COUNTRY BY NEXT TUESDAY THE 25TH (SITHOLE AND
MUZOREWA ARE BOTH ABROAD).

7. COMMENT: SMITH GAVE AWAY NOTHING AT THE MEETING
BUT HE DID NOT MOVE BACKWARDS. ON THE COUNTRY HE
AFFIRMED HIS WILLINGNESS TO GO TO A CONFERENCE UNDER
OUR AUSPICES OF THE SIX PRINCIPALS. FURTHER, FOR THE
FIRST TIME HE BEGAN FOCUSING ON THE SUBSTANCE OF SUCH
A MEETING. THUS WE FEEL WE HAVE MADE USEFUL PROGRESS
IN FINALLY GETTING DOWN TO A DISCUSSION WITH SMITH ON
THE SUBSTANTIVE BASIS OF DISCUSSIONS AT AN ALL PARTIES
MEETING.

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